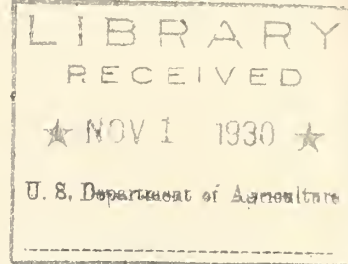
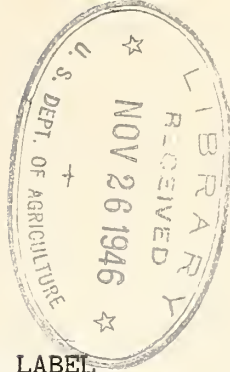


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Excerpt from a Radio Talk by
W. R. M. Wharton, Chief, Eastern
District, Food and Drug Administration,
U. S. Department of Agriculture,
through WJZ and associated NBC stations,
Monday, October 27, 1930



Serial No. 26

HOW TO READ THE LABEL

Cherries

Now, let's see what you need to know when you buy a can of cherries. This will depend upon the purpose for which you intend to use them. If you want to make a cherry pie, you will probably prefer a sour cherry rather than a sweet one, and necessarily you will wish a product with the pits removed. Consequently, you will buy a "sour-pitted-cherry" and the labels will tell you that the product is "sour pitted cherries" and if this is all the label tells you then you may be reasonably sure that the product has been packed in a medium of plain water with no sugar. Occasionally a manufacturer will use a small amount of sugar in canned red sour pitted cherries without claiming added sirup or sugar on the label. When a can of cherries is labeled "pitted" this means that the product is reasonably free from cherry pits, but the seeding is done with machines which are not 100% perfect, so occasionally a few pits will be found in canned pitted cherries.

On the other hand, if you wish a sweet cherry, generally, this desire will be for the purpose of using the product on the table as a dessert, as most sweet cherries are intended for table use, and they are usually canned without pitting. Such products generally are labeled "cherries" or "sweet cherries," "Royal Anne cherries," etc., and the higher grades are always packed in sugar sirup. It is safe to conclude that a product which is not labeled as "pitted," always includes the pits. You seldom see the term "Packed in water" on a label but the packing medium, as I have already said, generally employed in preparing sour pitted cherries is water. Sweet cherries in the higher grades are packed in sirup. From a quality standpoint cherries packed in sugar sirup are better usually than those packed in water or even in juice. For various packs of canned cherries, various strengths of sugar sirup are used. Stating the matter in a general way, we may say that there are three kinds of sugar sirup, depending upon the amount of sugar in the sirup. These are called, light sirup, medium sirup, and heavy sirup. Whenever a label says simply "Packed in sirup," the chances are that the sirup is a light sirup. A few distributors state the type of sirup used on their label, but most of them, particularly for sweet cherries, make no reference to the sirup content.

Sometimes you will find the name of the variety of the cherries on the label and in this connection you should know that Montmorency, Early

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Richmond, and Morello cherries are the most popular sour varieties, whereas the most popular sweet variety is the "Royal Anne." Some labels will characterize cherries as "White sweet cherries" or "Red sweet cherries," or "White wax cherries," and when no varietal name is used in these terms, the product may be any sweet variety of the color indicated.

It is important for label readers very carefully to check quantity of contents statements on canned cherry labels. The ordinary cherries of commerce are put up usually in No. 2, No. 2½, and No. 10 cans. The No. 2 cans may contain as much as one pound and 5 ounces, or more. This product is a heavy sirup pack. Some packers put only one pound and 3 ounces in a No. 2 can. This is a light sirup or water pack. The corresponding weight of a No. 2½ can is - sirup pack, one pound and 14 ounces; water or light sirup pack, one pound and 12 ounces. On the other hand, a No. 10 can may contain as much as 6 pounds and 11 ounces in a sirup pack, but some manufacturers give only 6 pounds and 4 ounces, which means a light sirup or water pack. So, my friends, do you not see that you should read labels to determine relative values on the basis of quantity received, as well as to insure that you get exactly what you wish to buy?

Cherries are now being put up by the so-called frozen pack method. The cherries are pitted and packed in barrels or large cans with layers of sugar and they are then frozen solid and kept frozen until delivered for use. The frozen pack method produces a delicious product not very much different in flavor from fresh cherries. Labels on packages of frozen pack goods declare them to be frozen pack and the ratio of fruit to sugar is frequently stated. Different packers use different amounts of sugar. Some employ two parts of fruit to each one of sugar, while other packers use as much as 4 parts of fruit to each one of sugar. The labels on frozen pack cherries show figures "4 to 1," or "3 to 1," or "2 to 1," as the case may be, and these figures represent the ratio of fruit to sugar.

Before I close this discussion, I want to tell you about the red cherries that you buy in bottles. You perhaps know them as maraschino cherries, but you will not find them so labeled. Maraschino cherries are naturally flavored cherries of the marasca type packed in an alcoholic cordial. The product, bottled cherries, on the American market really is a white cherry produced largely on the Pacific Coast and in France and shipped here in barrels in brine. They usually are treated with sulphurous acid to bleach and preserve them. American manufacturers after removal of the brine and most of the sulphurous acid, dye these cherries with an artificial red coal tar color and artificially flavor them with benzaldehyde or other artificial flavors and pack them in sirup which saturates the cherries with sugar. Read the labels on this class of products. You will find the label declares them to be artificially colored, artificially flavored, and artificially preserved when they contain sulphur dioxid or benzoate of soda, and the labels will not call them "maraschino cherries" because they are not maraschino cherries.